

## **CRITERIA FOR THE 2006 SECRETARY'S AWARD**

### **Secretary's Gold Medal**

This is the highest award granted by the Secretary. The Secretary will reward exceptionally outstanding leadership or service that is distinguished by achievements of marked national or international significance, reflecting great credit on the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Government by markedly improving the security of our homeland, The Secretary may give the award to an individual or a group.

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### **Secretary's Meritorious Service Award - Silver Medal**

This is the second highest award granted by the Secretary. This award recognizes exceptionally outstanding leadership or service that is distinguished by achievements of marked significance to the Department of Homeland Security. This award will recognize a body of work characterized by superior performance related to significant accomplishments, business improvements or notable resourcefulness, diligence, and/or integrity that significantly improved the efficiency, effectiveness or image of the Department of Homeland Security in one or more program areas. There will be one award given to a person from each component.

Nomination Criteria. Achievements or contributions must reflect at least one of the following:

1. Demonstrated noteworthy accomplishment of assigned duties, above others who have performed similar duties or tasks;
2. Accomplished duties in an exemplary manner, setting a record of achievement and inspiring others to improve the quality and/or quantity of their work;
3. Demonstrated unusual initiative and skill in devising new and improved work methods, equipment, procedures; inventions resulting in substantial savings in workforce expenses (people, time, space and materials) or improved safety or health of the workforce;
4. Demonstrated performance in a significantly valuable contribution(s) to the strategic direction of the DHS; or in implementing the President's Management Agenda.
5. Eminent authorship in one or more areas directly related to the Department's Strategic Goals.

### **Secretary's Award for Excellence**

This award recognizes outstanding achievement or innovation by a distinguished employee(s) engaged in work to further the mission of the Department of Homeland Security.

Nomination Criteria. Achievements or contributions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Demonstrated exceptional results or outstanding accomplishments leading to the investigation, apprehension or detention of an individual(s) suspected or convicted of a criminal offense; or ensuring the safety of American public officials.
2. Demonstrated exceptionally outstanding contributions in the field of law enforcement or homeland security through new developments and/or assessments used to combat terrorists and terrorism armaments.
3. Significant accomplishments related to strengthening the integrity of citizenship and immigration services, inspections and/or enforcement.
4. Significant contribution in creating and/or improving infrastructure (technology, programs, facilities, intelligence, workforce) which will enable the Department to better carry out its mission.

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### **Secretary's TEAM DHS Award**

This award recognizes a team which exemplifies the highest level of service and dedication in efforts which ultimately led to consolidating 22 previously disparate agencies into one unified organization. By integrating and upgrading resources to meet a common goal, this team helped to focus our collective efforts to create one Department, crucial in effecting one of the largest "change management" challenges of all time and making the Department of Homeland Security a reality.

The nominees will be Department of Homeland Security employees. (They may be a formal working group or an informal ad hoc team.)

Nomination Criteria. Achievements or contributions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Demonstrated effectiveness, succeeding above and beyond the call of duty, under short time frames and public scrutiny, in a unified collaborative effort, providing measurable results.
2. Demonstrated performance of an accomplishment or act that contributes, significantly, to building a unified Department of Homeland Security -- "one team, one fight, one mission."
3. Demonstrated results in accomplishing the goals of the President's Management Agenda.

### **Secretary's First Response Team Award**

The award recognizes a team which exemplifies the highest level of service, dedication in the face of challenging circumstances, teamwork, flexibility, resilience, and effective resolution of a situation(s) when acting as first responders to a natural disaster or terror event.

The nominees may be Department of Homeland Security employees, employees of other military services or agencies, or State or local responders who have participated in a joint response. They may be a formal working group or an informal ad hoc team that grew out of circumstances or events.

Nomination Criteria. Achievements or contributions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Demonstrated effectiveness, succeeding above and beyond the call of duty, in a unified collaborative response effort.
2. Demonstrated leadership in guiding the work of a team, coordinating efforts with all responders -- Federal, State, local organizations-and strategizing for results.

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### **Secretary's Award for Valor**

This award is the highest departmental recognition for extraordinary acts of courage or heroism by a civilian employee.. The award is only to be given in extraordinary circumstances.

Nomination Criteria. Achievements or contributions must reflect at least one of the following:

1. Demonstrated extraordinary valor or courage in a highly dangerous, life threatening situation or emergency under extreme stress and involving an act(s) of heroism, e.g., to save another person's life or the protection of property.
2. Demonstrated outstanding courage and voluntary risk of personal safety in the face of danger in an emergency situation while on or off duty.

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### **Secretary's Award for Exemplary Service**

Throughout the Agency, there are employees in administrative, technical, clerical, and general support positions whose work is critical to meeting the Agency's goals. As such, these outstanding employees' deeds often go unrecognized. This award provides an opportunity to recognize those employees. Employees in support services positions below GS-11 and WG-8 can be nominated for this award.

Nomination Criteria. Accomplishments or contributions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Demonstrated extraordinary initiative or skill in developing new or improved work methods or procedures that increased organizational efficiency and/or effectiveness.

2. Demonstrated an exceptionally high degree of initiative in attaining professional skills and using them to the maximum extent in supporting the programs or activities of their operational component.
3. Demonstrated noteworthy dedication to duty, flexibility, and professional skill, especially under demanding situations.

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### **Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Diversity Management**

This award recognizes an employee, supervisor, or manager who has excelled in efforts to promote diversity through exceptional, effective leadership, innovation, and perseverance, internally and externally, at the personal, interpersonal, or operational component level.

This award recognizes an individual: 1) whose actions create and maintain an environment where all have an opportunity to develop their maximum potential and contribute fully to mission accomplishment; 2) who recognizes and embraces the value of diverse opinions, viewpoints, and perspectives as representative of the diverse customer base served by DHS; and/or 3) who demonstrates a commitment to fairness, has compassion for others different from themselves, and demonstrates leadership in creating culture change..

Nomination Criteria. Achievements or contributions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Demonstrated leadership in supporting programs and activities that assist balancing diverse employee needs (e.g. training/educational opportunities, work scheduling flexibilities telework, tutoring, or dependent care responsibilities); by participating in voluntary recruitment and networking efforts or initiatives with representative organizations linking DHS with the community it serves.
2. Modeled behaviors of inclusion by embracing stakeholders, partners, customers, and constituents in collaborative program planning and implementation.
3. Produced the "best in each employee" through empowerment of direct reports, affording them the opportunities, tools, and support needed, including diversity mentoring, to enhance maximum development and growth..
4. Produced a measurable difference in organizational performance by identifying and eliminating barriers to fair and open competition for employment opportunities.

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### **Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service**

This award reflects the Department's high-level interest in recognizing volunteerism. Employees at all grades and organizational levels are eligible for consideration.

Nomination Criteria. Achievements or contributions include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Demonstrated significant contributions through a volunteer program(s) supported or sponsored by the Department.

2. Demonstrated significant contributions in serving organizations within their community.

The nomination must include length of volunteer service; number of volunteer hours per week, month or year; innovative ideas or initiatives that led to improving the conditions of the organization being served; type of service rendered; and benefit(s) to the community.

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### **2005 Hurricane Season Special Recognition**

DHS front line employees have played a critical role in the response and recovery efforts associated with hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. The Department's most valuable resource - its people - rose to the challenges presented to them, overcame criticism and skepticism, and worked above and beyond to carry out the mission of the agency.

Nomination Criteria. The Secretary will honor employees who have gone above and beyond the call of duty and have distinguished themselves and the Department by making a significant positive impact on the mission of providing hurricane disaster response and recovery and/or a significant positive impact on the public we serve.

Employees must have distinguished themselves in response or recovery efforts associated with one of the major hurricanes in calendar year 2005 (i.e., Katrina, Rita, or Wilma).